

Suffolk County Department of Health Services

Dump The Water & Scrub the Container Campaign

Reducing Mosquitoes and Preventing Mosquito-Transmitted Diseases

The bite of a mosquito may be not only irritating but also harmful, causing diseases in humans and animals. There are different species of mosquitoes in Suffolk County, and some can transmit infections such as West Nile virus (WNV) and eastern equine encephalitis virus (EEEV). It is up to residents to take action to reduce the risk of infection by reducing the mosquito population around their homes and neighborhoods. Residents are advised to follow some simple rules.

Included in this fact sheet:

- ◆ Information about two major types of disease-carrying mosquitoes found in our area
- ◆ Steps that Suffolk County residents can take to prevent mosquito breeding grounds in their own backyards
- ◆ Measures to avoid the bite

Northern House Mosquito

(*Culex pipiens*)

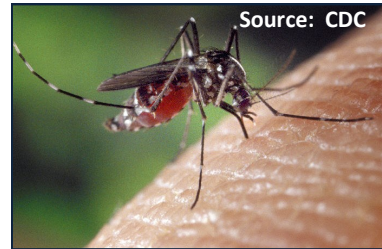


Photo by [Charles Rondeau](#) Publicdomainpictures.net

- ⇒ This light brown mosquito is a common carrier of West Nile virus and eastern equine encephalitis in the Northern United States.
- ⇒ Adult mosquitoes can be found in late spring through late fall.
- ⇒ Females feed on blood from birds and mammals (including humans) from dawn to dusk. Males do not bite.
- ⇒ A female *Culex pipiens* may lay several hundred eggs several times during a lifespan of days.
- ⇒ Females use standing water in small containers (such as bird baths, planters, barrels, used tires, tin cans, etc.) to lay eggs in clumps or "rafts."
- ⇒ Dumping the water from small containers removes the eggs and prevents them from developing into adult mosquitoes.

Asian Tiger Mosquito (ATM)

(*Aedes albopictus*)



- ⇒ It is called "tiger mosquito" because of the black and white stripes on its legs and body. ATMs have been found to carry West Nile virus and can also transmit dengue, EEEV, and heartworm in dogs.
- ⇒ A relative newcomer to Suffolk County, the Asian tiger mosquito (ATM) was first found here in 2004.
- ⇒ Female ATMs aggressively seek human blood meals during the day in the summer and early fall.
- ⇒ Female ATMs lay black eggs that adhere to containers above the waterline of standing water.
- ⇒ The eggs remain on the container and will survive dry for months, even over the winter if not removed. Dumping the water removes and prevents further mosquito development.
- ⇒ Scrubbing the container with a brush removes the eggs so they won't hatch if submerged again.

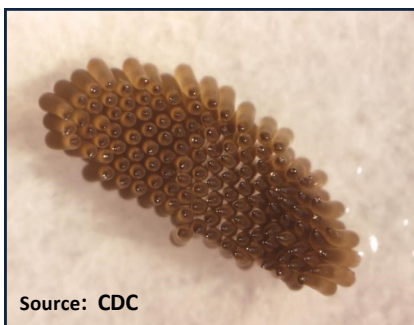
Preventing the Bite

Minimize time spent outdoors when mosquitoes appear to be most active.

Be sure door and window screens fit tightly and are without holes.

When outdoors:

- ◇ Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long-sleeves when mosquitoes are most active. Clothing should be light colored and made of tightly woven fabric to keep mosquitoes away from the skin.
- ◇ Use mosquito netting on infant carriages and when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure.
- ◇ Consider applying insect repellents. Follow instructions on the product's label. DEET can be applied to the skin, while permethrin should be applied to clothing only. Consult a physician before using repellents on young children.
- ◇ For more information about repellents, log onto: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/qa/insect_repellent.htm



Source: CDC

Northern House Mosquito egg "raft."

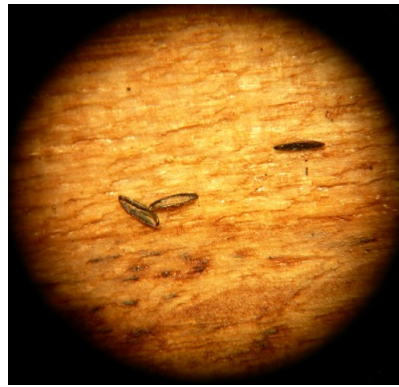
Eggs are laid on the surface of standing water and clump together forming a "raft."



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Dry eggs from the Asian Tiger Mosquito, found on a wooden paddle. Immersing these eggs in water will rehydrate them and the larvae will soon hatch.

Source: (Public Domain)
Commons.wikimedia.org

Dump and Scrub!

Take Away the Breeding Grounds

Check for containers that may have been filled by rain or sprinkler systems. Remove or discard containers that you don't want. Clean and keep dry those that you do want.

Areas where water can collect:

- Old tires
- Tarps and Buckets
- Low spots in your yard
- Unused plastic swimming pools and toys
- Bases of flowerpots
- Watering cans
- Pet dishes or containers that collect water
- Rain gutters should be kept clean
- Standing water on flat roofs
- Around faucets and air conditioning units
- Boats and cargo trailers



Photo by Marina Shemesh,
Publicdomainpictures.net

Empty and scrub bird baths, pet water dishes and plastic wading pools at least **every three days**.

For more information: <http://suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/PublicWorks/VectorControl.aspx>

<http://entomology.cornell.edu/extension/medent/uitofs.cfm>